

Chief Joseph (1840?-1904) of the Nez Perce was a leader of Native American resistance to white encroachment in the western United States.



During General O.O. Howard's 1887 Nez Perce campaign, Looking Glass and his band were camped up Clear Creek near here.

Looking Glass told Army authorities: "Leave us alone. We are living here peacefully and want no trouble." But after a July 1 military attack that destroyed his village, ruined his gardens and captured 750 Nez Perce horses, Looking Glass and his band joined other Nez Perce refugees and soon headed for Montana's buffalo plains. Howard spent three more months pursuing Joseph, White Bird, Looking Glass and their warriors after that fiasco.

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On their westbound journey, Lewis and Clark crossed here, September 15, 1805, after camping four miles upstream at Powell.

Their Shoshoni guide had brought them down an old trail from Lolo Pass to a Lochsa fishery he knew about. To continue west, he had to take them north up this ridge to rejoin their Lolo Trail route. Indian travel through here had to go along high ridges because Lochsa Canyon had too many cliffs and gorges to provide a good horseback route.

Sign number: 333

